

The background of the slide is a dark blue gradient. Overlaid on this are several diagonal, semi-transparent blue bars that create a sense of movement and depth. The title text is centered and rendered in a red, serif font with a thin black outline.

Penn State Survey of U.S. Farm Women

Collaborative Study

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Survey of U.S. Farm Women

- Last major national survey of farm women conducted by Rosenfeld in 1980
- Penn State survey:
 - April 2001 telephone survey
 - 2,661 farm women respondents
 - Also surveyed a subset of farm men

Survey Topics

- Perceptions of self as a farm woman
- Involvement in farm work
- Computer use to support farm operation
- Involvement in farm decision-making
- Adoption of sustainable farm practices
- Land ownership and inheritance
- Off-farm work/nonfarm businesses

Who participated in the survey?

➤ Average age	53 years
➤ Education	<u>%</u>
Did not graduate from high school	7
High school graduate	40
Education beyond high school	53
➤ Agriculture-related education	9

Demographic Characteristics (cont.)

	<u>%</u>
➤ White non-Hispanic	93
➤ Married	93
➤ Location of survey respondents:	
Midwest	41
South	40
West	13
Northeast	6
➤ Grew up on farm or ranch	46

Farm Characteristics

- Distribution of farms by sales class very similar to USDA survey distribution
- Produced one or more crops 57%
- Had animals (principally beef cattle, equine, dairy, poultry, sheep or goats, hogs) 68%

What do the study results show?

Observation 1: Over half of farm women in the U.S. consider themselves as 'main operators' of the farm or ranch.

53% of U.S. farm women consider themselves to be

‘the main operator or one of the main operators of the farm or ranch’

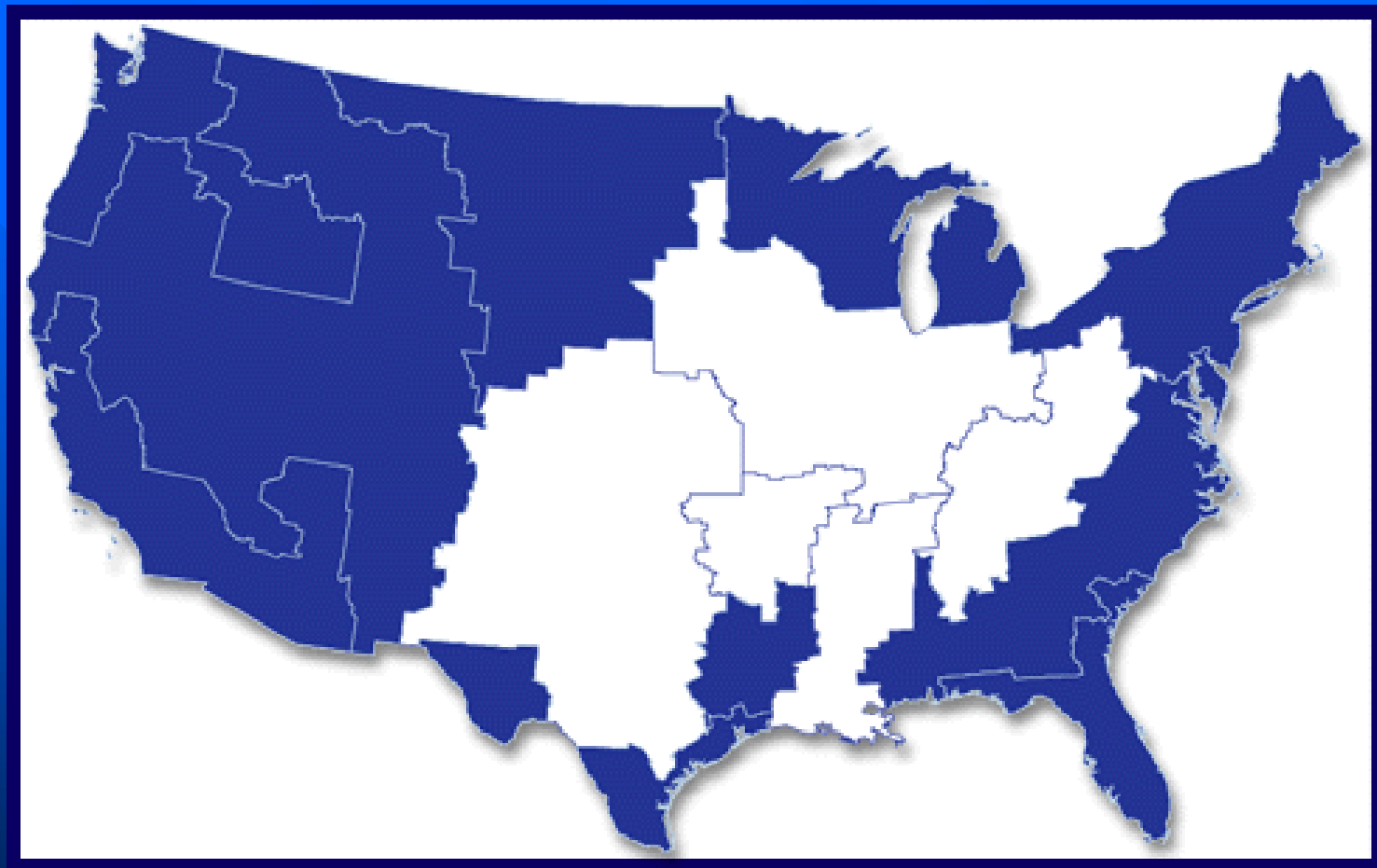


Figure 1. U.S. Farm Women As Main Farm Operators*

*higher concentrations in blue

Specific Roles

	<u>%</u>
1. Principal farm operator	9.6
2. Full agricultural partner	30.8
3. Business manager	7.2
4. Agricultural helper	33.0
5. No involvement	19.4

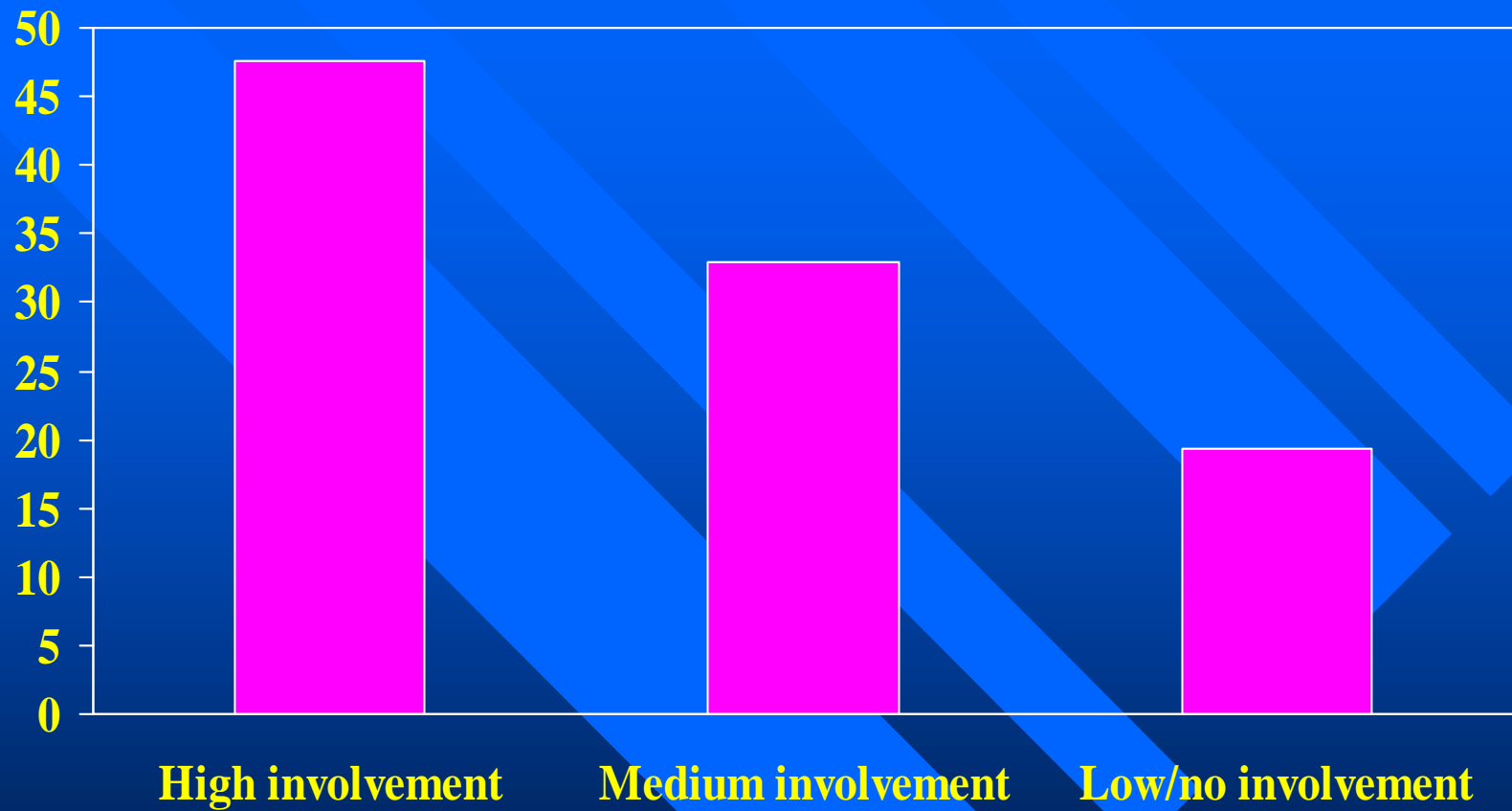


Figure 2. Self-perceptions of Level of Farm Involvement of U.S. Farm Women

Observation 2: U.S. farm women continue to make significant contributions to work on the farm or ranch, and are increasingly involved in major decision-making.

Involvement in Farm Work

Increasing involvement

<u>1980</u>	<u>2001</u>
-----	-----
%	

- | | | |
|---|------|------|
| ➤ Applying fertilizer, herbicides, insecticides | 17.3 | 19.8 |
| ➤ Doing other field work without machinery | 42.3 | 47.5 |
| ➤ Making major purchases of farm and ranch supplies and equipment | 37.1 | 48.0 |

Involvement in Farm Work

<u>Decreasing involvement</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>2001</u>
	-----	% -----
➤ Plowing, disking, cultivating, planting	37.4	32.9
➤ Taking care of farm animals	66.1	59.1
➤ Supervising the work of:		
Other family members	49.4	35.8
Hired farm labor	36.1	28.1

Computer Use

- 55% of farms in sample have a computer
- Women use computers for wide range of tasks (more than 75%)
- Tasks:
 - Accessing farm/ranch information
 - E-mailing farm consultants or 'experts'
 - Tax preparation, bookkeeping, record keeping

Involvement in Farm Decisions*

	<u>1980</u>	<u>2001</u>
	----- % -----	
➤ Whether to buy or sell land	61.3	73.1
➤ Whether to rent more or less land	52.2	64.6
➤ Whether to buy major farm equipment	47.8	57.8

*By self or jointly with someone else

Involvement in Farm Decisions*

	<u>1980</u>	<u>2001</u>
	----- % -----	
➤ Whether to produce something new, such as a crop or a new breed of livestock	42.0	52.8
➤ Whether to try a new production practice	37.4	52.8
➤ When to sell products	40.2	48.9

*By self or jointly with someone else

Observation 3: Significant growth in prevalence of off-farm work among U.S. farm women.

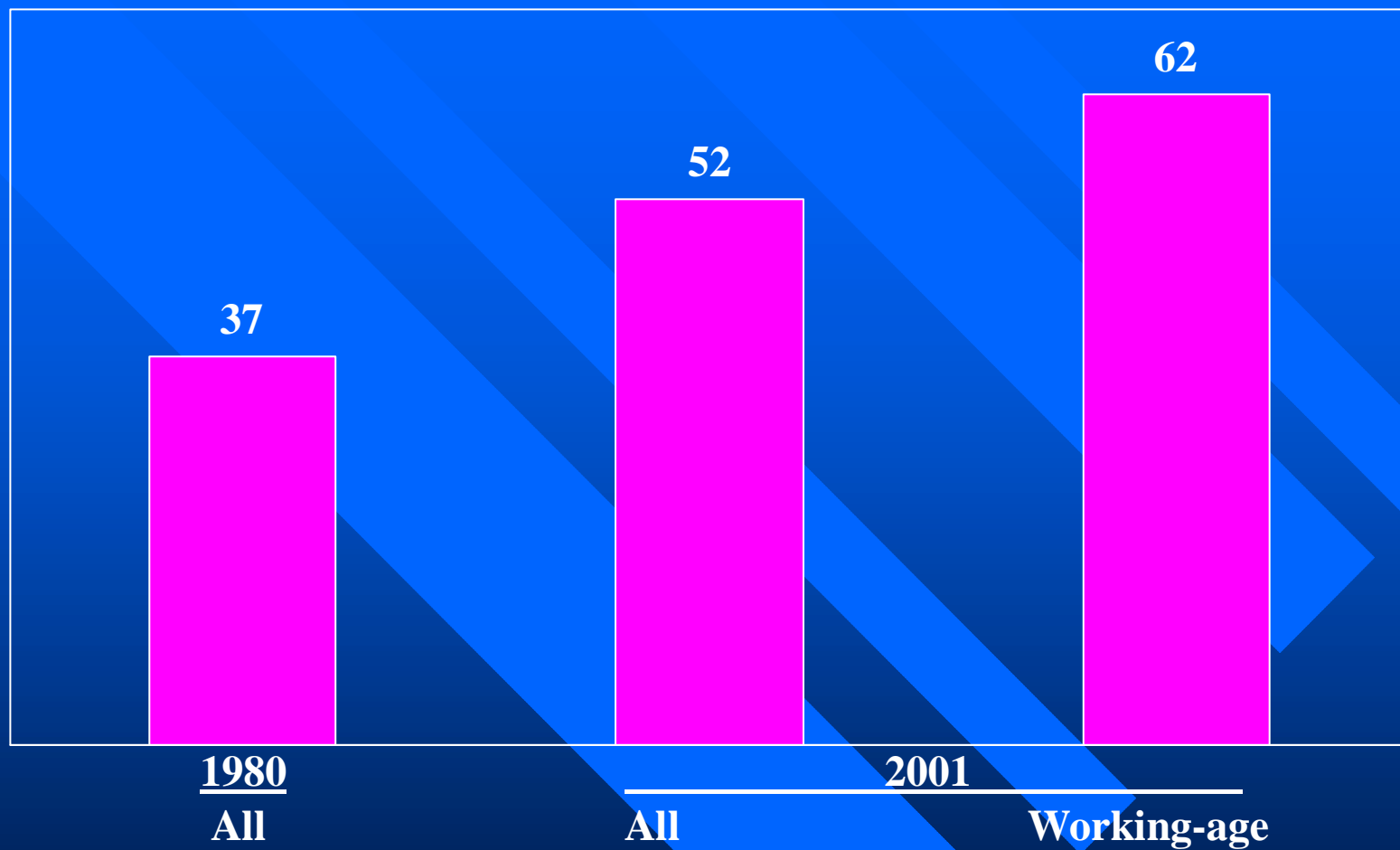


Figure 3. Prevalence of Off-farm Work Among U.S. Farm Women

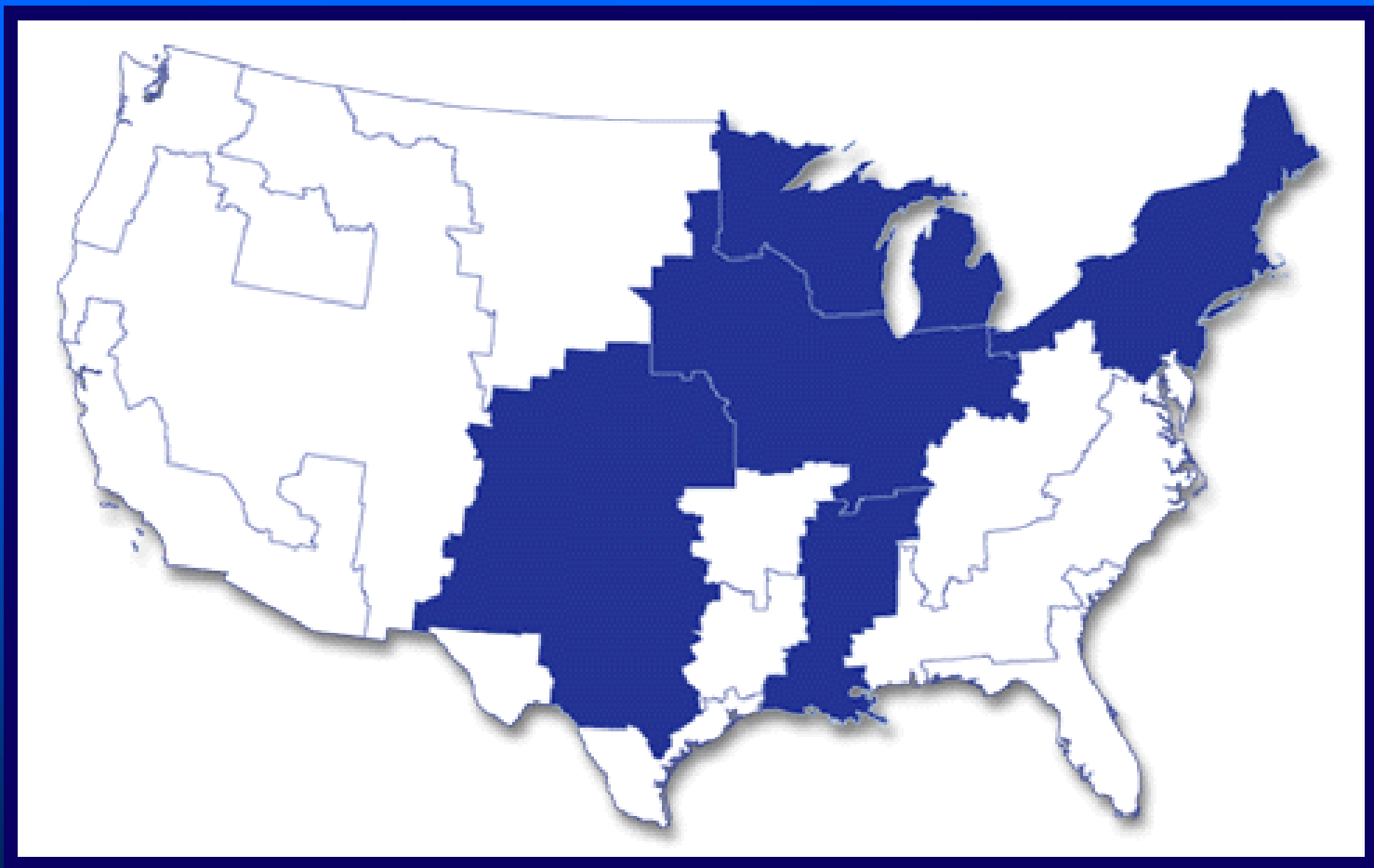


Figure 4. Off-farm Employment of U.S. Farm Women*

*higher concentrations in blue

Reasons for working off-farm

	<u>Very Important</u>	<u>Very or somewhat important</u>
	----- % -----	
➤ Money for household expenses	68	90
➤ Money for the farm operation	33	57
➤ Job benefits	54	63
➤ To develop or use job skills	53	79

Conclusions

- Many farm women consider themselves as ‘main operators’
- Off-farm work is providing income both for household and farm
- Women are taking a much greater role in farm decision-making